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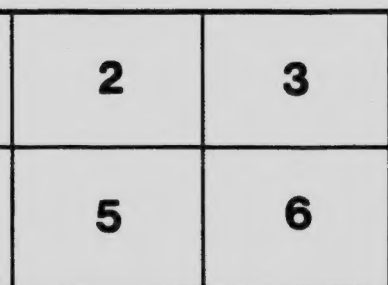
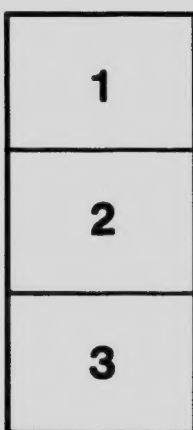
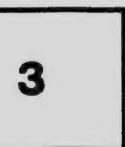
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INSTITUTE BRANCH

GROWING CHERRIES

IN MANITOBA



Manitoba Agricultural College
Winnipeg, Canada

Published by the authority of
Hon. Geo. Lawrence, Minister of Agriculture and Immigration

AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE,

Winnipeg, Man.

October 23rd, 1914

Hon. George Lawrence
Minister of Agriculture,
Winnipeg.

Sir:

This circular is a reprint of a paper delivered by Mr. A. P. Stevenson, Dunstan, Man. before an Annual Meeting of the Manitoba Horticultural and Forestry Association at the Agricultural College. As it contains much information of value to the farmers of Manitoba, I recommend its publication.

W. J. BLACK,
President.

Growing Cherries in Manitoba

We hear of very little progress being made in the growing of this delicious fruit in our province, and I have thought a few hints on what has and is being done in the way of experimenting with all the known hardy varieties of this desirable fruit might be of some interest to those who are desirous of planting out young trees.

Very few indeed of those who are in anyway interested in the growing of fruit in this country who have not at some time or other bought and carefully planted out cherry trees of all the well known eastern varieties, to have but the usual result of all being consigned to the brush pile the following spring.

I think it was in the spring of 1875 I planted out my first cherry trees in Manitoba, the varieties consisted of Windsor, Black Tartarian, and English Morello and although that is sometime ago I have still a vivid remembrance of the visions I then indulged in, of the fine crops of cherries to be gathered in future, but alas it was but a pipe dream. The following spring that cherry orchard was a thing of the past, and a mighty dead thing it was too. They made a beautiful fire, but our faith in cherry growing did not all go up in smoke, although for a time we rested from our experiments in that line. Hearing good reports of the hardiness of a variety known as Early Richmond we decided to give them a trial, and a few one year old trees were got from Minnesota. We decided to change our manner of growing the trees. The one year trees were what nursery men call whips, that is, no side limbs, straight, about as thick as a lead pencil, and three and a half feet high. After being firmly planted the tops were bent down flat on the ground and held there with wooden pegs. Growth was only allowed to start at the terminal bud which was turned up about an inch and tied to a stake, no limbs were allowed to grow on horizontal wood. In the fall the upright part of the trees were bent over and pegged to the ground, the following spring they were allowed to assume an upright position, there was enough spring in the ebbs of the horizontal wood to allow this to be easily done each year. In this way we grew fine crops of Early Richmond cherries, the birds being our only enemies. The trees just before freezing up

the was annually bent over flat on the ground held down with a hooked pin driven into the ground and a little mulch thrown over the limbs for the winter. On the approach of spring the pins were drawn out and the tree assumed an upright position. In eight years time the tree had grown so strong we were unable to bend them down. On leaving them one winter in an upright position we found them dead or nearly so the following spring. This closed another of our experiences in cherry growing, and although we grew some fine fruit for a number of years it could not be called altogether a success, so we decided to discontinue further planting in this manner.

In 1891 we heard of a number of hardy varieties of cherry trees that had been introduced to the States from Northern Russia, and from the introduction of Prof. J. L. Budd of Ames, Iowa. we received and planted out the following varieties: Bessarabain, 23 Orel, Sklanka and Shubianca, to those were added from Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa such hardy North German varieties as Cerise De Ostheim, Lutooka and Lithaur Wechsel. For a few years these varieties grew well and to all appearance were fairly hardy in tree, and we were in hopes something valuable and suitable for our extreme conditions had at last been found. In due time the trees attained sufficient size to form fruit buds in abundance but no blossom ever appeared. In brief the conclusion was reached, that while the trees were hardy enough the fruit buds were not, and that no fruit ever would be raised from them, so about the year 1898 all were consigned to that Tophet of so many blasted hopes the "Brush Pile." But still we had faith in the possibilities of cherry growing in Manitoba. From a friend in Minnesota we learned of a very hardy and prolific variety, known as the Homer Cherry, which had been extensively and successfully cultivated in that state for over forty years. Eight trees of this variety were received and planted out in most favorable location with every hopes of success as this variety was said to be the hardiest and best that was to be found in Minnesota, they lingered a while with us, but their time here was short and finally they also went up in smoke. But still we had every hopes of the ultimate success of cherry growing in our province. In 1899 we heard of a Mr. Kudson of Springfield, Minn., who had originated a fruit which he had named the Compass Cherry, as soon as trees were available we received two from the originator, one of these died the other lived, and is living yet, and bearing good crops of fruit. As this cherry has evidently come to stay a more ex-

tended notice of its qualities might be in order. The Compass Cherry is a hybrid of the wild Sand Cherry and the Miner plum. Its habit of growth is of the medium between the upright and the spreading form, and appears to be fairly hardy throughout the Province where it is now being grown to a considerable extent. The trees begin to bear when two and three years old. The fruit is of a dark reddish color, is excellent for home use and canning purposes, is of good size and quality, season September.

The tree (or bush) appears to be entirely free from the attacks of bugs, slugs or worms. It is true they are not the real cherry, but in my estimation they are one of the best fruits pertaining to the cherry we have found.

In 1900 we received from Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa a large number of one year old Seedling Cherry trees, these were grown from seed of the hardest Russian Cherries that had fruited at Ottawa, a number of these have proven fairly hardy with us, and for the last three or four years have been bearing fair crops. The fruit varies very much in size and quality, some being very small and very sour, others again being of fair size and quality. The habit of growth is a thick bush some of those on our grounds being seven feet high and seven feet across.

Hanson's Hybrid Cherries. This interesting class of new fruits originated by Prof. Hansen of South Dakota State College are worthy of more than passing notice, although of but recent introduction into this Province, they give promise of great value to us on account of the fine quality of the fruit, hardiness of tree and early bearing.

We will mention a few that have already fruited with us and would like to say here that should they prove as satisfactory in the future as they have in the past few years we would have no hesitation in saying that I consider them the most valuable acquisition in the way of hardy stone fruits of good quality, we have yet planted.

Etopa. This is a cross between a Sand Cherry and Sultan Plum, first fruited 1909, color dark purple, flesh dark purple juicy small pit, a large cherry over one inch in diameter, ripe September 7th.

Opata. A cross between the wild Sand Cherry and the Gold Plum, first fruit 1912, fruit is large being over one inch in diameter, dark purplish red, with blue bloom, flesh green, flavor a mingling of the sprightliness of the sand cherry with

the rich sweetness of the gold plum, quality delicious, pit small, ripe September 5th.

Esaptan. A cross between the Sand Cherry and Sultan Plum, first fruit 1912, color dark purple, size, will average smaller than Opata, quality delicious, flesh black purple from skin to pit, ripe September 6th.

Sansota. A cross between the Sand Cherry and the Desota Plum, first fruit 1912, size, over an inch in diameter, color black when fully ripe, with blue bloom, flesh cling, yellowish green, spritly pleasant, thin skin, the fruit is a mingling of the Sand Cherry and the Desota Plum. So far as tested this is the most prolific bearer of all the Hybrids in our orchard, fruit ripe September 8th.

Cheresota. Of the same parentage as the Sansota and while the fruit of that variety is round that of the Cheresot is longish with a small prickle at the apex, the fruit averages smaller than the Sansota, and about a week later in ripening.

Tokeya. A cross between the Sand Cherry and a Chinese Apricot Plum, first fruit 1909, the fruit this year was over an inch in diameter, color dark red, flesh green, of fine quality, pit very small, fruit ripe September 7th.

This completes the list of crossbred cherries that have up to the present fruited in our orchard, but there are a number of others that are promising that have not yet fruited. It will be noticed that some of the varieties of the crossbreds mentioned have been bearing since 1909 these we look upon as being quite hardy with us, while those that have only borne one crop, although the trees appear to be quite hardy, should have further trial before pronouncing definitely on their merits as to hardness of tree, although the fruit is excellent. We have been fruiting for a number of years selected types of the Wild Sand Cherry, sometimes known as the Rocky Mountain Cherry. The bush is quite hardy, and annually bears heavy crops of black cherries of medium quality suitable for canning. The Lake Bacikal Cherry from Siberia, a Japanese Cherry is also entirely hardy in tree with us, but as they have not yet come into bearing we cannot judge of the merits of the fruit.

This finishes our rambling paper on our experiences in endeavouring to grow Cherries in Manitoba, and in the fulness of time we think we will be able to grow this delicious fruit in abundance and also plums and apples. And in closing let me suggest to the man possessing a suitable location to plant a

small orchard of hardy fruit trees. He will not only add to his material wealth, but to the beauty of the landscape, and will provide a source of great attraction to his home. He will have helped to untangle the intricate mazes of nature's requirements and added a new charm to life.

He will enjoy exquisite pleasures in strolling in the orchard in the spring time and sniffing the balmy breezes, scented anew from his blossoming trees. In the fullness of his expanding soul he may exclaim, this is a grand old world after all and he who owns a good garden doubles the joys of life. He will feel a consciousness of having acted well his part, and he will leave to posterity a heritage better than gold.
